



Vermont Phoenix, Friday, April 26, 1929.

CONFERENCE IS ONE OF THE BEST

Older Girls of Vermont Here as Delegates Total 408

Notable Scene as 550, Including Hostesses and Chaperones,
Assemble for Banquet-Fine Addresses

To the Citizens of Brattleboro,

The eleventh annual Conference of the Older Girls of Vermont has come to a close after one of the most successful series of sessions we have ever had. It is the success which comes from co-operation. Because it is not possible to see personally all the people in Brattleboro who have contributed so generously of their effort, time and means to make our plans possible and give those girls such happiness, I take this opportunity to gratefully acknowledge for the Vermont Council of the District Y. W. C. A. and myself the hospitality and cooperation of the people of Brattleboro, without which this conference could not have been arranged and so thoroughly enjoyed.

ELIZABETH B. LEAVENS, General Secretary.

Delegates to the conference of Older Girls of Vermont-more than 400 in number receiving their closing inspiration of the conference Sunday night in the Centre Congregational church, when the annual session was brought to an end by a notably impressive service of candle lighting, following a talk to the girls by Rev. William H. Spence of the Church of Christ, Hanover, N. H. Delegates left for their homes Monday forenoon, taking with them delightful memories of their visit and a broader outlook upon life. The pleasure which Brattleboro people derived from entertaining the visitors surpassed expectations. and it was with genuine regret good-byes became necessary.

The church was filled to its capacity at the closing service. A printed service of worship and consecration was used, giving the hymns and the responsive selections. The church choir of 17 voices led the singing and rendered an anthem, Sing Alleluia Forth, by Dudley, Buck.

Dr. Spence, who has conducted the closing service of the Older Girls Congerence [sic] for several years, took for his theme, Pulling Up Stakes. The talk was based on the saying of Jesus that to become a disciple of Him one must take up his cross and follow Him. The original meaning of the word cross was stake, the speaker said, and he believed Jesus had in mind that meaning of the word. Just as it is necessary to pull up the stakes when the people who live in tents wish to move on, so if one becomes a follower of Jesus he must pull up the stakes that prevent Jesus from becoming the center of his life. The message was delivered with appealing force.

At the close of the talk (Dr. Spence did not call it an address), there was a period of silence for self-dedication, followed by a covenant of consecration read in unison with reverently bowed heads, and then came the Service of Lights. While all the members of the conference held lighted candles the church lights have been extinguished, they marched from their pews down the center aisle to the rear of the church, then down the side aisles and into the chapel, all singing with the choir the hymn, Lead On, O King Eternal, which brought the conference to an end.

An especially pleasing feature of Sunday afternoon's program, enjoyed not only by the girls but by many townspeople as well, was the organ recital by Bertram C. Baldwin, jr., in the First Baptist church at 4.30[sic]. The talented young organist, a senior in Brattleboro high school, excellently rendered a well-chosen program. In addition there was a selection by members of the high school boys' chorus, accompanied by Miss Jessie L. Hawley at the piano, and a vocal solo by Richard Dunklee, Mr. Baldwin accompanying on the organ.

Mr. Baldwin's program follows: Overture Triomphale, Ferrate; Memories, Demarest; Andante Con Moto (Fifth Symphony), Beethoven; Mighty Lak' a Rose (arranged by organist), Nevin; Night of Spring, Cronham; Irish Air, from County Derry, arranged by Lemare; Andante in G, Batiste; The Rosary, Nevin; Hymn of Glory, Yon.

Gay Scene at Banquet.

"Almost everything great starts at home and ends thee; if you are to make any headway in this remarkable age you must learn to emphasize the small things of life," was the charge of Miss Eunice H. Avery of Springfield, Mass., to the large body assembled in Community hall Friday night for the opening sessions and banquet of the 11th annual conference of the Older Girls of Vermont. IN addition to the large number of conference delegates, numbering in excess of 400, and guests and workers at the banquet, making a total of about 550, a large number of townspeople occupied the balcony to witness the most inspiring scene of gay-capped girls enthusiastic conference and their extreme delight in Miss Avery's "rule for being great," expressed in her characteristically charming manner and accompanied by a wealth of facts and information. Miss Avery, who last December addressed the Brattleboro Woman's club, cast a spell over her audience with her brilliant wit and bubbling vivacity.

Girls from all parts of the state arrived in town all day Friday, coming in small and larger groups, accompanied by chaperons. They registered at the conference headquarters at the Centre Congregational church and then were escorted to the homes to which they had been assigned. Meeting at Centre chapel at 6.30 the girls marched in a body to Community hall for the banquet. The hall never presented a more festive appearance and there were many favorable comments on the simple but most effective scene. The stage, from which the Brattleboro high school orchestra, under the direction of Fred C. Leitsinger, played enjoyable selections, was beautifully decorated with potted hyacinths, spring flowers and palms and other greenery. The head table, reserved for speakers and guests, was attractive with large bowls of tulips and jonquils. Hats of pastel hues, which later all donned, were at all of the tables, as were colored candles which were lighted at the beginning of the feast and extinguished with appropriate ceremony at the close of the program when the Candle Song was sung.

The banquet arranged by women's committees from the local churches, was efficiently served by a corps of waitresses, each table being presided over by a hostess. Mrs. Ralph P. Churchill was chairman of the banquet committee. The menu consisted of scalloped potato, cold ham, rolls, jelly, cocoa ice cream and cake.

Miss Leavens Presides.

Miss Elizabeth Leavens, general secretary of the Vermont Y. W. C. A., presided and added much to the enjoyment of the affair by her graciousness and charm, which has endeared her to the girls of Vermont. In an introductory speech she urged the girls to work for a stronger purpose and clearer vision. As toastmaster she first introduced Town Manager William Plattner, who expressed words of welcome in behalf of the town. Rev. Milton S. Czatt next gave a hearty welcome from the churches of the town. Addressing the delegates as "typical American girls," Miss Karah L. Fitch of Brattleboro expressed a welcome from the girls of Brattleboro, to which Miss Caroline Taft of Wallingford, chairman of the conference, charmingly responded. Greetings from the Vermont Y. W. C. A. Council were given by Mrs. C. C. Fitts of this town.

At this point the girls unanimously voted to send a wire message to Miss Marion Gary of Rutland, member of the Vermont Council of the district the Y. W. C. A., beloved by the girls, who is now in Washington, D. C. A telegram from Mrs. Gary to the girls expressing her "affectionate greetings" was read by Miss Leavens. In the absence of Miss Elizabeth B. Herring of New York city, member of the national board of the Y. W. C. A., who was a scheduled speaker, Mrs. Brownell Sage of Suffield Conn., member of the Rural Communities department committee of the national association, extended greetings from that group.

Miss Leavens then took the happy occasion to introduce to the conference her new assistant, Miss Dorothy Dodge of Rutland, associate secretary of the Vermont Y. W. C. A., who in a brief but very friendly and winning manner expressed her sentiments.

The program was interspersed with yells and songs by various groups and delegations, many expressing the approval of their reception and entertainment. Directly following the "after dinner" speeches the evening session was open with the singing of the hymn, O Master Workman of the Race, followed by a vocal solo, Swaying Willows, pleasingly rendered by Miss Martha Holland, accompanied by Miss Jessie L. Hawley.

Miss Leavens then announced the appointment of the following committees which she said would convene Saturday morning, final reports of which would be given that afternoon. They are: Resolutions, Mrs. Douglas chairman, Helen Strenahan of Rutland, Barbara Beardslee of Springfield, Stella Williams of Londonderry; credentials, Mrs. Dwinnell, chairman, Julia Gordon

of Quechee, Eleanor Pillsbury of Williston; nominations, Miss Gates, chairman, Eleanor Wilson of Ryegate, Elizabeth Fairbankks of Brattleboro, Dorothy Leach of Essex Junction.

Miss Linnea Wennersten rendered two delightful solos, If Your Pass Through My Garden, and Just a Wearyin' for You.

All in the Day's Work

Miss Avery, who was introduced by Mrs. C. C. Fitts, introduced her subject, All in the Day's Work-of Being Great, with an appropriate poem, Spring Housecleaning and followed with a most amusing description, The Perfect Wife, written in the year 1761. The ridiculous specifications of a bachelor of '61 were commented upon by the speaker, who continued: "Styles change of course, even in character, on the surface, but never in fundamentals. In this fact we stand convinced and realize that health and beauty always will be requisites. The flapper is definitely out and she is replaced by the 'nation's sweetheart,' the type of which is exemplified by the girls chosen by ideal young Americans, 'Lindy' and John Coolidge." The speaker then read a poem, Do You Know It's You? gathering as a moral, if one does not like surrounding conditions, he may set to work to change them. Illustrative of this point Miss Avery gave a detailed account of the career and principles of Thomas G. Masaryk, president of Czecho-Slovakia, [sic] and familiarly known as the "George Washington" of that country. Dr. Masaryk, the eldest statesman from the son of a hostler to a professor of the University of Prague, and then as the first president of the small republic, is a noteworthy example of a man who became great only through conquering the greatest of adversities, a simple-hearted man who has always kept in mind the value of little things. Miss Avery told of a very interesting interview last year with President Masaryk, who is now in his 79th year, and related incidents and impressions of the occasion. The remarkable development of Czecho-Slovakia [sic] since its establishment 10 years ago is due in great part, the speaker explained, to the leadership of the president, a recognized world figure, and such associates as Dr. Eduard Benes, also of lowly birth,m who is now secretary of state of the republic.

"There is a common idea that one must get away from home to do great things," declared Miss Avery, who promptly exploded this belief, and in illustration of the fact that simple, homely things

are truly great, she read two delightful poems, Little Roads to Happiness, and Lord of the Pots and Pipkins.

She stressed the need of the girls to prepare themselves for the world which in this age has developed into such huge proportions and has seen such remarkable discoveries made. She reviewed the important scientific achievements of last year, emphasizing the years of toil and labor by many men before the realization of their dreams came true dreams which we today are reaping benefits from. "In one's personal struggle to 'do things' the thought that matters most is that he is not alone," she continued. "In every country throughout the world, girls are laboring to be big in a world that wants its people to be square. Greatness lies in the recognition and adherence to the real fundamentals with an emphasis on the beauty and worthwhileness of things," Miss Avery said in closing, and exhorted each girl to create her own desires to make the world as fine as she wants it to be.

Saturday Morning's Session.

Saturday morning's session opened at 9 in the Centre Congregational Church, Miss Leavens presiding. A devotional service was conducted by Mrs. Brownell Gage and singing was led by Mrs. Sadie A. Macarthur, supervisor of music, with Miss Elizabeth Fairbanks at the piano. The main address scheduled to be next on the program, a health talk by Miss Ruth Page Sweet, director of health education, Y. W. C. A., Boston, was deferred because Miss. Sweet failed to arrive, and the business session was opened by Miss Caroline Taft of Wallingford. Miss Betty Barber of this town, serving as acting secretary in the absence of Miss Elizabeth Jenney, read the minutes of the annual conference held in Rutland last year.

Miss Leavens made several announcements, the first being the fact that All Souls church will be open all day so that the delegates may view the famous replica of the snow angel by Larkin O. Mead, sculptor, formerly of Brattleboro. She urged the girls to visit the statue some time during the day.

The original newspaper announcement of Mead's "Recording Angel" was in The Vermont Phoenix of Jan. 3, 1857. It reads: "A snow statue. The denizens of 'Toad Hill' In our village were agreeably surprised when coming down from breakfast Tuesday morning, to find a beautiful statue at the fork of roads opposite the schoolhouse. It was about eight feet in height and represented the Recording Angel that may be supposed to wait upon Time making up his record at the close of the year. In her right hand was a style, while in her left she held the tablet on which the events were noted. It was modeled in snow the previous evening by Larkin O. Mead, jr., in a manner which was of itself evidence of his superior claims as an artist. It was visited by hundreds of people, all of whom were more than pleased at his novel specimen of native talent."

Miss Leavens then described some of the advantages and benefits of life at Camp Mochelaga, South Hero, urging al [sic] who could to spend a vacation at the Y. W. C. A. camp. She then assigned the various groups to the discussion conferences, which were held in the high school building, following this session, seniors from Mt. Holyoke college, under the direction of Miss Mary Curtis Foster, college Y. W. C. A. secretary, leading. The leaders were asked to step forward as the1r names were called.

As Miss Sweet had not arrived and no word of her whereabouts was received, Miss Leavens proceeded to give an impromptu talk on The Six Stepping Stones to Helpful Life, Which included very instructive advice concerning health and ideals. As the first stepping stone she emphasized the need of correct posture as necessary to good health; second, plenty of reserve power to insure one's well being; third, the absolute essential of acquiring a spirit of adventure; fourth, to find a hobby which will be instructive and will occupy leisure time; fifth, to learn to play, a necessary step in developing good nature. Miss Leavens advised: "Learn to play, laugh and make fun for the happiness of yourself and others." The sixth and last stone was dreams. She urged the girls to keep their cherished plans and hopes before them and to work for them. "Set your goals high," she I advised, "and then climb to the top." ! She likened the "lovely peaks of the Green mountains" to their dreams, which reached are the fulfillment of their precious desires.

Following the session a conference picture was taken in front of the high school by Hayes Bigelow, photographer.

Registration Reaches 408.

Saturday afternoon's session in the Centre church was feature by committee reports and an address by Miss Mira B. Wilson, director of religious and social work at Smith college. Miss Dorothy Dodge of Rutland, one of the conference executives, presided. After this the girls wen to All Souls parish house, where an extremely entertaining illustrated talk was given by Theron Drean of Burlington. Mr. Dean showed a large number of views of The Long Trail, which extends along the ridge of the Green mountains between Massachusetts and Canada and gave vivid word pictures of the beauty and enchantment to be found by frequenters of the trail.

One of the committee reports show that the attendance of registered delegates to the conference was 408, reprocessing 107 towns, and that four academies were represented. It was stated that the number of towns sending delegates was the largest in the history of the girls' conferences. The nominating committee's report showed the election of the following officers for the coming year: Chairman, Clara Jay of St. Albans; vice chairman, Pearl Sheldon of Sheffield; secretary, Caroline Cole of Bradford; assistant secretary, Barbara Beardslee of Springfield.

Miss Wilson of Smith college to for her subject The Bliss of Growth. She emphasized the fact that it was not the physical growth-the growth in inches-that furnishes a basis for joy, so much as some other elements in one's life. In many attics are boards bearing pencil marks showing the height of some member of the family at different periods. It is of more importance that we be conscious of increasing service to others, to check up our lives in this respect. One's automobile is of less value with each succeeding year, but it ought not to be that way with our bodies; they will increase in service to us if we know how to utilize them. One sees and hears more of beauty as one grows older. We should train our lives so that there will be a growing perception of the beauty that lies about us. The desirability of a growing skill in some one thing on the part of each person was emphasized. "Part of the fun of growing," Miss Wilson declared, "is to feel that I can do a thing better this year than I did it last year. One result of having a skill is that people depend upon you because of it. A person is a better friend if he has a skill."

Efforts for world peace.

One of the high spots of the conference was an address in the Centre church Saturday night by Rev. Dr. D. Brewer Eddy of Boston, secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, who was presented by Miss Florence H. Wells of Brattleboro, a member of the Vermont Y. W. C. A. Council and chairman of the meeting. Following musical numbers, Dr. Eddy gave a wonderfully enlightening address on Can Nations be Christian today?

Of course nations can be Christian, Dr. Eddy declared. By that is not meant 100 per cent perfect; no individual can be that; the outstanding Christian leaders are the ones who realize their own Imperfections. "I am not talking about the idealistic Christian-the one who never does a wrong thing." -the speaker declared, "but the one who attempts to follow in Jesus's way."

A nation can be Christian, asserted Dr. Eddy, if its outstanding choices based on the Golden Rule. He then mentioned five great events that have just come to the front in the picture of world events, and the first one which he referred to was the passing of the Kellogg peace pact by 14 nations and which will become operative if and when Japan signs it. It is the only universal treaty ever signed by America or ever undertaken, Dr. Eddy expressed the belief that it would be signed by Japan. The second great event which the speaker mentioned as looking to world peace is the coming disarmament conference. If the present preliminary conference fails we should not feel that the cause of world peace has received a serious set-back, but rather we should look to the main conference in a year hence with the belief that public sentiment will have so crystallized as to make its success assured. The reparations conference which is trying to determine whether we can find a basis for constructive peace in the world was cited as the third event of world importance. If it fails it will set back the clock for world peace in the opinion of Dr. Eddy, but if it succeeds it not only will make for the peace of the world but will bring great industrial prosperity to Europe. The effort to establish a world court was named as a fourth event of prime importance, and the fifth is the new congress, with the nation under the administration of a constructive, world-minded, engineer president.

The Christian path lies ahead for the nations that dare take it. Dr. Eddy assured his audience and he pointed out that this nation can be a leader in Christian democracy. In gripping fashion he told the story of the Kellogg peace pact from its inception to the present time, and he stressed the [act that the spirit of the world is ~at war has failed.

Dr. Eddy did not wish to be understood as advocating the scrapping of all national defenses; in fact he made clear his belief in the necessity of the maintenance of reasonable defenses. He did drive home the point, however, that world peace would bring world prosperity that would make the desert blossom like a rose. And in this effort, he declared, America has a chance such as it never had before in leading in international brotherhood and good will; to prove "whether we are Uncle Sam or Uncle Shylock."

In closing the evening service the chaperones stepped to the front of the pulpit, lighted candles from candles held by the conference executives, and after forming in line across the church assured the delegates of the personal interest of the chaperones in the girls under their charge.

Additional citation:

Accessed from the original newspaper print of the *Vermont Phoenix*, located at the Brattleboro Historical Society Research Room, 230 Main Street, Brattleboro, Vermont.

Researched by John Carnahan, February 18, 2016. Transcribed by Reginald Martell, February 23, 2016.

There are instances of spelling irregularities in the original text. Each instance is noted with a bracket: [sic], denoting sic erat scriptum, "thus was it written."